



**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515-6538**

April 21, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker of the House  
H-232, U.S. Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi,

With the House now in its fourth week of regular session being suspended, I am writing to request that we work to establish a clear, safe, and effective plan for reopening Congress.

In my view, conducting the business of the People's House is the definition of "essential work"—just as many of our friends and neighbors continue working to hold up our communities on a daily basis.

Unfortunately, members have yet to be given specific guidance as to how Congress will fulfill its core duties—from deliberation to oversight to legislation—over the coming days and weeks.

Since the onset of this pandemic, Congress has worked expeditiously to undertake the largest relief effort in our country's history. Nevertheless, I think we can agree that our institution's current posture cannot and should not become the norm.

Below are several issues that should be addressed in any such plan—and on which myself and our members stand ready to work with you towards a constructive, bipartisan solution:

**Committee and Subcommittee Business**

- How will committees and subcommittees draft and mark-up high priority legislative items, such as the National Defense Authorization Act and FY21 Appropriation measures, as well as conduct key oversight, for example into the World Health Organization's initial response to this pandemic?
- What schedule can be instituted to resume committee and subcommittee activity that comports with CDC Guidelines and recommendations from the Office of the Attending Physician? For example, staggered meeting days and rotating use of larger committee hearing rooms to maintain adequate social distancing.

### **House Calendar**

- In a recent Dear Colleague, Leader Hoyer stated that “the House may meet during weeks that had previously been scheduled as District Work Periods, and four-day weeks may become five-day weeks.” Given that multiple session weeks have already been lost and the Majority Leader has announced an additional two weeks of recess, I would urge a revised 2020 calendar be sent to all members for their planning purposes.

### **Floor Proceedings**

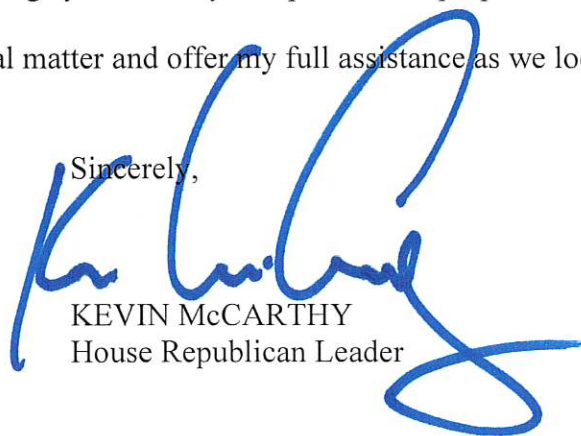
- How many hours of advanced notice will be given to guarantee members have sufficient time to be present for any recorded votes in the House?
- It has been reported that Chairman McGovern is recommending a House rules change to allow for “voting by proxy” during this period. What are the details of this proposal, how will it avoid potential abuses of power, and when do you expect this proposal to be made public for the necessary scrutiny and member input that changing 200 years of House precedent would merit?
- What consideration, if any, has been given to utilizing the provisional quorum authorities outlined in House Rule XX, Clause 5(c), which specifically contemplates use in a pandemic?

I fully appreciate the unprecedented nature of this challenge before us. But now, more than ever, our constituents expect us to rise to the occasion and overcome these trying circumstances.

It is imperative we outline a pathway forward that ensures transparency and regular order for all members—not centralized decision-making by a select group of leadership and staff that reduces the role of representative to merely voting “yea” or “nay” on pre-drafted proposals.

I appreciate your attention to this critical matter and offer my full assistance as we look to get back to work in the People’s House.

Sincerely,

A large, stylized handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read 'Kevin McCarthy', is written over the typed name and title.

KEVIN McCARTHY  
House Republican Leader